

HEAVEN'S METAL

ALL METAL HARD ROCK ALL THE TIME



VIRGIN BLACK



June/July 2007 Issue #69 \$2.95

MISERATION
PETRA
MINISTRY & METAL?
INTERNATIONAL METAL REPORT



Brutal new re-issues coming your way from Rowe Productions. As we are all aware that back in '91 when the Self Titled Album came out many of you did not receive the T- shirts you ordered from that release from the dodgy US supplier. So now in support of the re- issue of The Self Titled album through Soundmass all those classic T- Shirt designs will be re- issued one to two month intervals throughout 2007. Check out the first 3 available!

**Be Old School for Jesus
& wear them loud and proud!**

**"The Destroyer
Beholds"**



**"Majestic
Infiltration"**



"Lake of fire"

TRUE AUSTRALIAN JESUS REVOLUTION METAL!

**Also available from Rowe Production "Erasing The Goblin"
German release CD & Erasing T- Shirt with Brutal back print.**



"Erasing The Goblin" CD

**"Erasing The Goblin"
T-Shirt**



Please note. All Mortification albums released on Nuclear Blast are available to purchase online from itunes. You can simply buy a song you like or a complete albums. This has been a great windfall for the Ministry of Mortification & helps to see more \$ available to share more Jesus Metal with more Metalheads. Support the Cause that supports you & buy from itunes today. We are officially paid for every sale from Nuclear Blast itunes purchases.



www.roweproductions.com

Check out all the latest Christian Metal & Rock Online at: www.foxrock180.com

HEAVEN'S METAL

The new crew review...

You'll meet each and every one of us eventually, via our "Meet The Press" feature, which digs for the dirt two at a time, but now it's time for an unannounced evaluation/review of the Heaven's Metal "Karev" as we call it: Chris Beck is an impeccable writer, knows his stuff well; Bob Beeman is always travelling the world, spreading the Gospel; Jeff Collins is "the VOICE" at KVTT in Dallas and loves old school mullet metal; Mark Blair Glunt just took on a new job as a youth pastor and is moving from PA to OH and does publicity+booking for lots of metal & prog bands; Chris Gatto brings writing experience & plans to tackle several "So & So Says" style articles for us; Genifer Groff is always coming up with cool ideas for the "back page," (you go, girl!); Loyd Harp is...well, you can see on page 5; Daniel Jesse is the "Metal Judge," & a Master's student in Philosophy; Johannes Jonsson is from Sweden, which means he's probably blonde and shreds on guitar; Mike Larson (see page 5); Jeff McCormack used to publish *The Pendragon* (we got him on our team before he'd start another competing publication); Trevor Ray is a metallic madman from New Zealand, our own "little kiwi" fruit; Steve Rowe plays in some band; Jonathan Swank is actually a real heavy metal doctor; and Todd Walker must be a fan of VH-1's old "Where Are They Now?" series. Overall grade? A+

Grace and Peace,



ELEMENTS

- 04 METALTRACKS** Once Dead, Bloodgood, Johannes Jonsson's "Bullets from Sweden," My Silent Wake, Mike Lee, LC ... what?
- 08 VIRGIN BLACK** Jeff Collins talks to VB's Rowan about their amazing new trilogy.
- 10 MISERATION** Daniel Jesse interviews the prolific Jani Stefanovic.
- 12 PETRA** Trevor Ray talks to John Schlitt and Bob Hartman.
- 16 METAL & MINISTRY** Roy & George go off.
- 18 ALBUM REVIEWS** 17 of 'em
- 21 COLUMNS** Steve Rowe and Pastor Bob

Heaven's Metal Editorial Team:

Chris Beck, Bob Beeman, Jeff Collins, Mark Blair Glunt, Chris Gatto, Genifer Groff, Loyd Harp, Daniel Jesse, Johannes Jonsson, Mike Larson, Jeff McCormack, Trevor Ray, Steve Rowe, Jonathan Swank, Doug Van Pelt, Todd Walker

HmMagazine.com/heavensmetal/

1-year subscriptions (6 issues): \$9.99 (USA) | \$21.77 (Foreign)

Advertising/Editorial Info: dvanpelt@hmmag.com

512.989.7309 | 1660 CR 424, Taylor TX 76574

Copyright © 2007 Heaven's Metal (TM). All rights reserved.



The Day of Total Armageddon Holocaust
Alive in Oslo

After 12 long years, Horde returns with a brand new live CD of the one and only EVER live performance at Nordic Fest in Oslo, Norway - November 3 2006.

You must own this piece of Unblack Metal history.



OUT NOW!

Visit veridonmusic.com for MP3s

METAL TRACKS

Hard-news-for-metal-heads



WHERE ARE THEY NOW? ROSANNA'S RAIDERS

By
**JEFF
McCORMACK**

Back in the late 1980s, when Christian metal was making leaps and bounds in the music scene, many great classic metal bands were being pumped out by the now defunct Pure Metal Records. In 1988, they brought us the first release by Rosanna's Raiders. Many people (like me) snagged it up quickly due to the affiliation with Pure Metal, only to find a band that was more rock than metal. Many people fussed and complained about this, which caused mixed reviews from the metal crazed audience. The band was a hard rock trio made up of Rosanna Palmer on lead vocals and guitars, husband Dave Palmer on bass and Johno Zaffarese on drums. Though the band was one that it seemed you either loved or hated, they nevertheless made an impact on the movement—to this day their two CDs are sought after and paid top dollar for when found. So, now almost twenty years later, where are they ... and where have they been? Well, we caught up with Rosanna recently and here is their story.

You released your second album *Calling Down Fire* in 1989, then you kind of fell off the radar. Where has the band been these past 18 years or so? Have there been any of recordings that never saw an international release?

We were pretty naïve when working with record companies and didn't really know how to negotiate or deal with them ... so, after the two releases we basically just kept doing what we were doing, as well as continuing to do concerts in high schools, prisons and Christian festivals, etc. We were now pastors and trying to balance this all out. We were involved in running the music for "Youth Alive" Victoria with Mal Fletcher, a major youth movement, as well as then helping to organize music for pastors' conferences. We did continue to record albums, mostly solo, although *Changes* was recorded with the exact same members. I called it a solo album, as it contained more of a variety of styles than the original Rosanna's Raiders. I recorded a worship album as I had many

worship songs written and it seemed like a good idea to lay them down. I also sing and speak in churches, which caused me to write many songs suitable for acoustic guitar. When involved in another church, Dave and I set up a studio in our home and helped them record worship albums, which contained a lot of my worship songs. I continue to write songs and hope to be able to focus a lot more on recording in the next few years as it is still very much the passion of my heart to see people become all that God has called them to be ... and, in turn, to become worshippers of the living God who created them and has a great plan for their life.

Today, Dave is the principal of Surfcity International Bible College at Surfers Paradise and I am the Worship Pastor at Surfcity Christian Church and we are in the midst of recording a church album for the opening of our new building. Johno (drums) has been busy raising his family of six kids and running his own staging business.

I understand your two CDs are in the process of being reissued. Will there be any bonus tracks?

Yes, Retroactive/Watergrave Records are re-issuing our old CDs and yes, they will include bonus tracks. It has been a pleasure to get to know Matthew (Hunt); it is always good to meet people who are using the gifts God has given them to serve God. Any way that we can continue to get the Word of God out is a good thing, no matter what shape or form we must get it out there. We serve an awesome God and people need to know Him and know that He also has a great plan for their life.

How can fans contact you?

We did have a website for a while, but I don't think it is happening anymore. If it is, we haven't updated it for many years. People can email us at davidandropalmer@hotmail.com.

Read more of this interview at hmmag.com/heavensmetal

News bullets



Retroactive Records is sponsoring a real metal treat exclusively to all Heaven's Metal Fanzine subscribers (and only to Heaven's Metal Fanzine subscribers – how 'bout that?!). The plans are for this to be a permanent part of your Heaven's Metal Fanzine subscription (so get all your buddies to subscribe now). See page 13 for the track listing and cut-out cover art.

Once Dead have signed with Open Grave Records, and is in the studio finishing up their new CD *Visions of Hell* to be released this summer. **Glenn Rogers** has left the band **Hirax** to focus full time on his position in **Once Dead**.

Thurane, Donny Fargo (drums) and **Dave Reeves** recorded some new material and are hoping to launch a hybrid project from the camps of **New Jerusalem & Neon Cross**. It's a blues-rock sort of thing, with some Eighties-metal, folkish ballads and other tasty treats for you to feast on.

By the time you read this, the new *Up From the Ashes* DVD is expected to have begun shipping. The DVD contains footage from both events, from such bands as **Deliverance, Saint, Ultimatum, Once Dead**, and more. Buy your copy quickly (roxxproductions.com) as this is a limited pressing that will not be re-issued, they say.

Roxx Productions is also currently seeking submissions for a new compilation entitled *Acoustic Metal Alchemy*. They are for really heavy artists to record a song toned down to an acoustic format. Are you up for a challenge? If you have a submission that fits this project or are interested in recording something for this project let them know!

Mike Drive (formerly known as **Mike Lee of Barren Cross** fame) is back in the US after many years living overseas. Check out his new band **Fast Drive** at myspace.com/fastdrivehome.

Mijaces Records has released the new debut solo CD by former **Awake** front-man **Mike Botello** entitled *A Timeless State*. This acoustically charged CD is compelling and will strike a deep personal reflection from within. Visit mjrecords.com.

Former members of **Teramaze, Clint Johannes** and **Matt Ritchie**, came to the US and recorded a CD in 2003 under the band name **Shroud**. The CD was never released to the public ... until now. Pay shipping and a CD of this great release is free to whoever asks. Visit myspace.com/shroudband for details.

Metal Godz Fest will happen in St Petersburg, FL on Oct 20th at The State Theatre. Confirmed so far are **Deliverance, Blissed, Realign, Sanctified**, with more to be announced. For more info or bands interested in performing please email backtotherockprod@yahoo.com

The members of **Lust Control** still refuse to reunite even though 25 people or so would like to see it happen.



Meet the Press



LOYD HARP

Age: 33

Fav metal album of all time:
Vengeance – *Human Sacrifice*.

Pet's name:
4 outdoor cats: Dora, Boots, Diego and Saurus.

Interesting fact/something goofy:
I own around 1,600 CDs, all of which are catalogued alphabetically by artist and chronologically within the artist. I also post the list online for other music geeks to look at – talk about anal!

I'm also potentially interested in doing a back page article at some point. It's in the vein of the topic Steve Rowe hit on in issue #67, but it would approach more how we represent Christ and such to non-believers. The main gist would be how we often get duped into thinking we will become better witnesses for Christ by becoming less like Him.



MICHAEL J. LARSON

Age: 38

Fav 2006 metal album: Frost Like Ashes – *Tophet*.

Fav metal album of all time: The Accused – *More Fun Than An Open Casket Funeral*.

Fav movie/TV: Movie = *Alien*; TV = *Angel* or *Firefly*. Basically, I think Joss Whedon is a genius.

Interesting fact / something goofy:
I move a lot, I have lived in 8 states so far: Wisconsin, Utah, Montana, Washington, New Mexico, Illinois, Kansas and Missouri, and honestly I am wanting to move again soon.

Something Goofy: The largest fish I ever caught I actually snagged, which is the only way to catch this particular type of fish, by the way; it was a paddlefish and weighed 70 lbs.

Admonish has recently released a new EP titled *INSNÄRJJD (Entangled, Ensnared)* on Momentum Scandinavia. Musically, it features a wide span of sounds, from furious black metal storms to the melodic whispers of the winter night. The CD is printed as a limited edition of 850 copies. For more info visit: admonish.org or momentumscandinavia.com

Chained is a cool and aggressive metal band from the north of Sweden. They have a sound that will appeal to fans of bands like Pantera, Slayer and Lamb of God. <http://chained.ig3.net>

Pantokrator has brought us death metal for many years. To celebrate their 10-years anniversary they have released the compilation *A Decade of Thoughts 1996-2006*. Included on the compilation are several previously unreleased tracks. Besides the 14 tracks on the album, the booklet is also filled with personal memories, drawings and photos—serving both as a celebration and a take-off for future adventures along the road. The CD is printed in a limited edition of 850 copies. The band is also working hard in the studio with the recording of their brand new CD. pantokrator.com

Crimson Moonlight has now finally released the 4-track EP *In Depths of Dreams Unconscious* in Europe on Endtime Productions. crimsonmoonlight.com

The Swedish heavy metal band **Evergrace** has decided to change name to **Incrave**. The self titled debut album that was released September 30th last year will be re-released April 20th under the name Incrave and with the album title *The Escape*. The album will include a bonus track called "The Masquerade."

Sound samples from the upcoming album of **Carl Johan Grimmark**, the guitar shredder of Narnia, can now be enjoyed at his mspace site. <http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=122497257>

Jerusalem has released a double DVD titled *Live 2006 – In His Majesty's Service*. The DVD was recorded on their 30 Anniversary Tour and contains the whole 2.5 hour gig! The DVD also contains interviews, behind the scenes footage, lots of pictures and videos. To say it short, this is the ultimate DVD for anyone that loves Jerusalem! Unfortunately though, it's in Swedish only. Check out some clips from the DVD on jerusalem.se

Messiah's Beard is a brand new thrash metal band. They have a demo EP out titled, *All Work and No Slaughter*. myspace.com/messiahsbear



Bloodgood played two shows in Nashville at this year's GMA Week. With **Oz Fox** and **Paul Jackson** on guitars (plus surprise guest **David Zaffiro** on the song "Seven"), and the band sounded as tight and "on" as ever - as if they hadn't missed a beat all these years.

Whitecross played a set right before Bloodgood on one of the nights, and they were also spot on.

The Legends Of Rock show in Germany a couple months ago featured a rejuvenated **Bride, Guardian** (with **Tim Bushong** on guitar) and **Toumiquet** tearing it up.

Krig is a newly formed progressive death metal band from Brazil, featuring **Isaque Soares** (Sabbatarium, Mercy, and Apeiron) and **Daniel Corpse** (Mercy, ex-Sabbatarium).

METAL TRACKS

Page 6



DESTROYING EVOLUTION

In your latest issue, Roy of Fear Dark said that Steve Rowe completely misses the point concerning the bands that are 'hiding the message'. He speculates that people walk away from preaching bands, and then suggests an approach by metaphorical lyrics & investing in personal relations instead of preaching. I will try to analyze the situation through personal experiences. It seems that nowadays Christians don't really know why & what they believe. At a point that they get embarrassed by the following question: "Where is your God? What is He doing today?" Those Christians timidly answer: "I feel something warm in my heart." Have we just forgotten that the prophecies cover a third of the biblical record? After nearly 2,000 years, Israel is once again a nation in the land of their ancestors, as foretold in Ezekiel 36:24. Israel is a powerful message by God to the nations & a proof of the accuracy of the Scriptures. Jesus was born in Israel, died for our sins in Israel, rose on the third day in Israel & is coming back in Israel! Through biblical prophecies, you can catch the attention of the people around you & challenge them: "Here is what my God is doing!" About 2 years ago, we had a conflict inside Demoniduth concerning the full-biblical approach. God spoke to me through 1 Kings 13. On that day, I totally had faith that the message of salvation was 100% based on our trust that His Word is completely sufficient to reach the lost. Christians always pray for a spiritual awakening & don't want to honour God's Word. Since August 2005, I'm part of the "Christian Friends of Israel" organization in my city, where we give each two Saturdays a biblical perspective to the passengers that stop by our stand. Those times have been a real apprenticeship as we're challenged by Muslims in anger, especially hard times during the Lebanon-war, where the police had to intervene. Muslims lodged a complaint against us for "trouble of law and order" & we will soon have to respond before a court, even if we owned a legal authorization. What am I trying to say? In the midst of all opposition, I have seen God's fidelity & power when we were just preaching His Word. Unbelievers are searching hard for a meaning of life & there are no Christians to speak clearly? Do we underestimate The Word of God? People get touched & open their heart when they hear the message from above, not a timid message based on our wrong presuppositions. I put it to the test: in the army, in my job, in the fitness centre, within the metal scene. One of the biggest newspapers of our country even wrote an article in first page when the Elements of Rock in its first edition in 2004 took place, speaking of the first "Christian Evangelical Metal Festival"! Recently, in my job, a colleague asked me for a Bible. We were speaking Creation vs Evolution for one year. I was

helped by creationist literature & patiently showed him how science refers to a Creator, demolished evolution before him & pointed to the authority of the Genesis record. He is now asking questions about Christ! I have seen a real thirst for truth among the metalheads. We just have to affirm what the Bible says, sure that "the word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void" (Isaiah 55:11). Preach!

—Taanak (Demoniduth, Switzerland)

WANNA SEE MY SMILIN' FACE

I am a subscriber to Heaven's Metal fanzine, and I recently noticed in the last issue that you spoke about a collage, and something about only receiving 36 or so photos. I have not been getting your zine that long, so I just wanted to ask you what that was all about. Are you planning on putting together a collage of the fan's personal photos that we can send to you, or is this something completely different? If that's what it is, I would appreciate it if you could give me information on how I can get a photo in there. That sounds like a great idea.

—Matt Theologou, via internet

Ed – Sorry if you missed the chance to get your photo on our cover of the last issue. That was cool. Not sure if we'll ever do that again, though.

YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME...

You probably do not remember me, but I sure remember you living in Fairfax & working at a bank(?) - Pickett Road / Fairfax, VA and putting out a black and white HM newsletter/zine that was just 4-6 pages long containing Barnabas, Stryper, Daniel Band, Rez, etc. Yes, I do remember issue # 1, and have not stopped subscribing since then. I was so happy that someone out there did what you did. Let's see, we're talking around 1984-85 ish? Anyhow, just wanted to say hi and a big congrats on your success with HM. Life is interesting and strange? When I started to read your zine I was single, now married 20 yrs with 3 children, 18 yr old daughter and two sons 15 & 13 and still live in Fairfax, VA. Thanks again, a fan of HM for life. Would be curious on how many of the original subscribers are still active; and yes, I am a "old dude," 46yrs.

—Eric Rose, via internet

Ed – It's hard to forget someone when you used to handwrite all the mailing labels back then; but I've been in Austin, TX since 1985, which is where I had that bank job. I left Fairfax after 8th grade back in '77. Good to hear from ya, Eric.

[nothin' but] News bullets

Disciples of Christ ministry has been distributing a mass amount of music to the public for free by going to biker and local rallies and handing out free Christian music. They also have an online store of rare music. Contact Bill Paldino for more information at dox_disciplesofchrist@yahoo.com.

My Silent Wake is following up their critically acclaimed debut *Shadow Of Sorrow* with an ambitious 2-disc album the likes of which has not been seen in the metal market. The first disc demonstrates the evolution of the death /doom sound with HUGE guitars, long, epic songs, and Ian's trademark mix of growls and singing. Disc two sees My Silent Wake going mostly unplugged and exploring more of an acoustic, gothic, atmospheric medieval sound.

Bombworks Records Day of Metal at the Cornerstone Festival on Wed. June 27th includes: **A Hill To Die Upon, With Faith or Flames, Kibbroth Hattaavah, Deus Invictus, The Burning Issue, Exousia, Common Yet Forbidden, Dagon, Lo-Ruhamah, Aletheian, and Crimson Moonlight.**

Two-time Dove Award winning guitarist **Rex Carroll** (Fierce Heart, King James, The Rex Carroll Band, and Whitecross) will be playing **The Rex Carroll Sessions** live at the Cornerstone Festival Thursday, June 28th on the Sanctuary Stage. This is an event that Rex Carroll fans won't want to miss!

Crosswalk Records recording artist **Awake the Suffering** is hard at work recording material for their first national release. The 10-song concept album titled *Inside the Mind We Die* is set to be released June 16th and is an attempt to redefine the modern Christian metal scene with one of the most brutal sounds to ever be released in their perspective market.

Girder Records, in conjunction with GirderMusic.com, will be re-releasing all four **Rob Cassels Band** recordings, *Straight Shot, Off the Wall, Kamikazee Christian*, and the very rare first recording by Rob Cassels, *Evening Pastoral*. Each disc will contain bonus material such as demos, video, live performances and more.

This little bit of news for Christian metalheads: I was perusing the ring back tones available from Verizon Wireless and they had a metal section. I noticed a bunch of Chevelle tones among the somewhat odd selection of Megadeth, Metallica and Priest. However, they also had a song from **Mortification!** How perfect is that for your average Christian metalhead teen? Mom calls to check up and hears THAT, shakes her head and thinks "Sigh. That Johnny! At least he's shredding the sanctified thrash ... I wonder how much I'm paying for that?" Heh heh (by Rich Upjohn).

For those of you who thought HM Magazine wasn't your cup of tea, think again. The May/June issue includes a raging 3-page color story on **Virgin Black** and guess who's booked for Friday night on the HM Magazine Stage at Cornerstone Festival? **X-Sinner, Bride, Whitecross, and Bloodgood.**

Once Dead
VISIONS OF HELL

available
august 28th

Featuring Ex-Members of:
Vengeance Rising, Fasedown,
The Crucified & The Blamed

kekai - the habit of fire



out now

feast eternal - with fire



august 28th 2007

a.w.a.s. - hope



out now

feast eternal - prisons of flesh



out now

OPEN GRAVE
RECORDS

available at fine record stores everywhere
or order online at: www.opengraverrecords.com
call 1 (877) OPN-GRAVE

distributed by:
NVARRE
CORPORATION
OPEN GRAVE
DISTRIBUTION

VIRGIN BLACK

INTERVIEW BY JEFF COLLINS
EDITED BY JONATHAN SWANK



ACCORDING TO THE BAND'S WEBSITE, VIRGIN BLACK (VER-JIN BLAK) IS AN ANOMALOUS HARMONY BETWEEN THE JUXTAPOSITIONS OF PURITY AND HUMANITY'S DARKNESS.

Go ahead and read it again, I will wait... Virgin Black hails from the land down under; no, not Hell—Australia. Rowan London – vocals, piano; Samantha Escarbe – lead guitar; Ian Miller – bass, backing vocals and Chris Edis – guitar, backing vocals. With reviews in over a dozen media outlets, they have been called Gothic, Gothic Metal, Metal, Opera Metal, Ambient and the list goes on. Whatever you decide to label them, just make sure you leave plenty of room to change your mind. Virgin Black's music has the ability to take on a "life" all its own. Remember, life is ever changing.

To date, Virgin Black has four discs under their belt, starting with their self-titled demo in 1995. This demo exceeded all expectations to the point of it being sold throughout the "world-wide underground"—three of its tracks made it onto the compilation disc *Falling On Deaf Ears*. In 1998, the album *Trance* represented a progression toward the experimental. To the best of my knowledge, no lab animals were injured. Score this disc! Fast forward to 2001 with the release of *Sombre Romantic*. This was the album that secured them contracts with Massacre Records (King Diamond, Fates Warning) and The End Records (The Gathering, Ulver, Sculpture, Agalloch). This album is considered by most to be Virgin Black's defining moment. By 2003,

they released a 75+ minute, complex, deep, conceptual disc called *Elegant ...and Dying*. There is one track named "The Everlasting" that clocks in at 17 minutes and serves as a beautiful centerpiece for this majestic album. Along with this 2003 release, Virgin Black found themselves playing live performances with Agalloch and Antimatter. They then moved on to the "Wave-Gotik-Treffen" festival in Germany along with the "Metal for the Brain" festival in Australia. These guys and a gal have also played with such heavy hitters as Opeth, Paradise Lost and one of my all time favorites, Entombed. (A brief synopsis of what can be found in more detail at the band's website, virginblack.com)

So what is next for this band? How about the release of a music trilogy named *Requiem*? Join Jeff Collins as he catches up with Virgin Black to talk about the past, present and the future. Kick back and enjoy!

You have defined Virgin Black, which is posted in the opening of this article; can you please define your definition?

There is a correlation between what the music is doing and the ideologies that accompany it and almost the entire soul of Virgin Black. We identify with this coy but poignant "dictionary definition" in a number of ways, but most importantly it's suggesting that despite the "ugliness" that pervades humanity, there is the impossible possibility of purity and that is what we should be seeking. One can interpret it as a spiritual, social or political exhortation, but regardless, it accurately identifies our creed.

"I would love to be known as legends, but the reality is that I have a life to live out, and the results are secondary to the commitment to a life lived right."

Were there any other names for the group you were kicking around before settling on Virgin Black?

Dark Goddess of Purity? No, that would typify the misinterpretation of the name Virgin Black, and so no, Virgin Black was the one and only name.

Many different people have described your music, in many different ways. How would you describe it to the person who picks up one of your discs for the first time?

It is an exploration of dynamics, tonality and note structures that reflect the moods and emotions of most likely many others and us. It is dark, very dark; but not deliberately so, and not without a healing sentiment. As with everything that permeates Virgin Black there's the stylistic dichotomy of using opposing musical forces to both contrast or harmonize. At the end of the day, the only pre-requisite is a love for dark moods and sounds.

Describe to our readers, using as many adjectives as you need, the differences between your releases, from the self-titled demo all the way to the first installment of the *Requiem* trilogy.

I do not think there is much difference apart from resources having changed. We continue to make the music that we want to hear and while each release sounds different, the source remains much the same. We seem to work in stages, with *Requiem* being stage three. The demo and *Trance* EP, while very different, combine to give an image of phase one—a very young band not constrained by the "genre police" and exceeding certainly their own expectations with the releases finding homes all around the world. Phase 2 was the big break-through period with *Sombre Romantic* being the catalyst for our signing to two labels and *Elegant...and Dying* following it up with a reasonably similar approach. Those two albums are closely linked, sonically and thematically. The sounds are a more complex and opulent version of previous works with strains of doom, black metal, classical and industrial fusing to illuminate the plight of the soul who seeks truth. *Sombre Romantic* describes the search for purity in principal, while *Elegant...and Dying* follows up with search for purity within the context of reality.

What motivated Virgin Black to take on such an endeavor as the trilogy?

For some reason it seemed we were destined to write a requiem, regardless of how daunting it would undoubtedly be. We were dealing with a long-established tradition created by the master composers and then, of course, the inherent subject matter. All in all an extraordinary responsibility. The initial stages of writing were fruitful, but somehow stifled and claustrophobic. As soon as the seemingly ludicrous idea of three albums surfaced, however, an incredible freedom was awarded. It was strangely easier to write three albums rather than one, with the scope to create anything exclusively classical, extremely heavy or any amalgamation.

Now, Virgin Black has toured with some of the "best of the best" out there. What have been some of the greatest memories from your tours of days gone by?

Three tours: Nazgul; Agalloch/Antimatter and Opeth. All of these tours had us gelling almost like family and combining for an unforgettable artistic showcase.

What kind of touring plans lay before you with supporting *Requiem*? Any dates in the U.S.?

It seems we will visit all corners of the U.S. with performances through June and July.

Let us change gears just a bit for a moment. When you are kicking back with friends and family what are the topics of discussion?

Metal, metal, and more metal—then 19th century classical—then metal.

Where is your "happy place"?

The recording studio.

Do you have a favorite Bible verse?

They are all good.

How would you describe your personal relationship with God?

Personal.



Do you have any regrets?

If life is art then I want a weathered oil paint encrusted canvas, cracked and abused, but mounted in the finest gold frame, not a pristine airbrush piece. I have many regrettable life experiences, but I choose not to try and smooth them over, rather to accept the character they contribute. To me, it does not really matter what they are, and besides, I am not going to tell you anyway!

Thanks for taking the detour with me. Going back to your music now, did you have any specialized musical/ vocal training early on to achieve what you have today or is it just natural?

At age 14, I bought my first album; by age 15-16 I was singing in a death metal band alongside acts like Kreator, Fear Factory, Bolt Thrower and Pungent Stench. For me, it is a matter of getting stuck in and doing it. I had a short training period in opera circles, but for the most part am self-taught and self-motivated.

When all is said and done, what'd you like people to say about Virgin Black?

Sure, I would love to be known as legends, but the reality is that I have a life to live out, and the results are secondary to the commitment to a life lived right.

Does the definition for Virgin Black still mean the same to you today as it did when you first began?

When I first began the interview? Yeah. When I first began in the band? Pretty much.

I want to thank you for taking the time to chill with me for a while and for sharing your heart with our readers. Any closing/last thoughts are yours, my friend...

Thank you, Jeff. Appreciate it. Be committed to a life lived right.

HEAVEN'S
KATAL

MISERATION

INTERVIEW BY DANIEL JESSE



JANI STEFANOVIC (EX-RENASCENT, DIVINEFIRE) IS ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC WRITERS IN CHRISTIAN METAL RIGHT NOW; HE RECENTLY RELEASED HIS THIRD DIVINEFIRE ALBUM, THE MELODIC PROGRESSIVE METAL ESSENCE OF SORROW ALBUM AND JOINED FORCES WITH SINGER CHRISTIAN ALVESTAM OF SCAR SYMMETRY (ONE OF THE HOTTEST MELODIC DEATH METAL BANDS OUT THERE TODAY) TO CREATE MISERATION. READ ON AS JANI AND DANIEL JESSE DISCUSS THE BAND'S ORIGINS, THEIR SCORCHING NEW ALBUM CALLED *YOUR DEMONS ~ THEIR ANGELS*, AND THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF METAL.

DJ: How did this band get started? How did you (Jani) get in contact with Christian, and how did the band form?

JS: Well, after I left Renascent, I clearly wanted to continue with a band that played death metal, so that's the main reason why I founded Miseration. Christian and I met through a mutual friend "Plec," the studio engineer on several albums I have made. I knew Christian's work from before and had wanted to ask him to join me on some project—luckily he said "yes"—and I am very pleased with the results.

Why did the band form? Both members are successful in other bands (Divinefire and Scar Symmetry) so why form a new band? Or is this a side project?

It is a band and currently we are three members—the

latest addition being Rolf Pilve (Essence of Sorrow, Dream Tale, Sightless) on drums. I decided to form a new band when I left Renascent. I didn't think that Christian would've wanted to join the band since he had so many bands already, but he liked the material so much that he wanted in as a full time member.

Could you talk about the start of Miseration a bit more, and possibly on the meaning of the album title?

The reason for the birth of Miseration was simply because when I left Renascent, I felt the need to continue with a band that played melodic death or whatever. The original plan was to have Barry Halldan (ex-Renascent) on vocals, but for different reasons we never made it through due to his work—and I had school—so our schedules never matched. Then I

moved on to the next alternative, Christian Alvestam, and he just brought something new to my original ideas and made it just so much better than I could've ever imagined.

As for the album title ... the meaning of the title is not directed towards any certain kind of people, it simply means that it depends on from what angle you are watching something, it will always look different for you. A thing that is bad according to me might be good in your eyes and the opposite as well.

Do you foresee doing more albums as Miseration?

Absolutely.

What were your main influences? Did you try to stay away from the sound of your other band projects, or mix them together? To my ear, it sounds like a mix, plus some extra "new" influences.

No, I don't really think that way when I write music, more than I know if it's death or melodic metal or whatever. I think I have developed a style that can be heard in all of my bands, even though the styles differ. It's pretty hard to completely separate them and that is, maybe, the downside of it all. But, I think personally that there is a clear difference between the bands or at least I'd like to think so (he he). But, my influences, I would say, are death metal, thrash and some black (metal). I prefer keeping it challenging for myself (with both guitars and drums). What it sounds like, I leave up to the listeners (he he).

Where do you see metal going in the next few years? It seems that bands like Mercenary, Into Eternity and Scar Symmetry are paving the way, but with more emphasis on the progressive elements in music rather than the death metal elements.

Wow, that's a really tricky question. I seriously don't know. I think some old school elements might turn back into fashion again (he he). No, I don't know. I'd have to spend a lot more time thinking about it. I have never really thought about this type of thing. I just play.

Where do you want metal to go in the next few years, and how do you (Miseration) fit into that?

I would like a huge leap for metal, for it to be more accepted in media and so on. It feels somewhat underground, even if it has existed for so many years. That is the way it feels when I meet people at school and so on, as if they would've never heard of the term metal (he he). More exposure for good metal bands—Miseration included.

Coupled with the last two questions, what do you think defines metal now-a-days? With the rise of metalcore and nu-metal and all these sub-genres that elitists seem to think are not metal, do you think that these sub-genres or such are still metal, or would you label them something else?

Well, for me, nu-metal is bands like Korn, Linkin Park and so on—since they were called so back when

RAD ROCKERS

THE MOTHERSHIP OF HARD TO FIND CHRISTIAN MUSIC

LOOK FOR THESE HOT TITLES NOW:



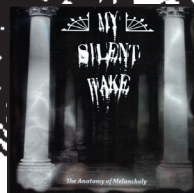
Titanic
Full Steam Ahead



Deliverance
As Above So Below



Pantokrator
Decade Of Thoughts



My Silent Wake
The Anatomy Of Melancholy

WWW.RADROCKERS.COM

info@radrockers.com

"I do think that labeling bands can sometimes hinder more than help, especially when it is about Christian bands."

they arrived—but I do not think that it is metal. Then we have the next American wave of metal with some Gothenburg vibes to it, but more modern, like Killswitch Engage. But I really suck at these things ... I'm not so into categorizing bands. This might sound a bit stereotypic, but maybe the European scene is more metal to me and then the new thing on top of that is the American wave of metal in its various forms.

Following up on that, do you think that the definition of metal changes? There seems to be a debate among metalheads as to whether or not what was known as metal back in the 70's and 80's is still metal. An example would be something like Led Zeppelin or Guns N' Roses, which were labeled metal, but now seem to be different forms of rock. Just wondering your opinion.

As I look on those bands today, I think Led Zeppelin is rock in my ears (he he). I don't know if you have the same word, but Guns N Roses is hard rock (as is Mötley Crüe). I don't know about all those 80's, early 90's hair bands (he he). Maybe it was metal back then, but today I would not call them metal.

What do you think about religious affiliations in the metal world? As I am writing for *Heaven's Metal*, I wonder if Miseration is a "Christian" band, and I wonder what you feel about being labeled either a Christian or non-Christian band. Does a religious label help or hinder you? It seems, either way, that it could open up or close markets. Do you find it this way? Or is this something that you (Miseration) care about?

As I am the only Christian in Miseration, we had some discussions about the lyrics and so on and there were some concerns about being labeled as a Christian band ... and I totally understood that since we didn't share the same beliefs. Even though the lyrics move around very religious subjects, they can, at the same time, be taken as fiction since many people, for instance, do not believe in demons or angels and so on. Out of respect for my bandmates, we decided to keep a neutral profile, neither promoting ourselves non-Christian nor Christian—just a band called Miseration.

I do think that labeling bands can sometimes hinder more than help, especially when it is about Christian bands. It has happened, sometimes, that a band doesn't get a fair shot since the reviewers only focus is on what religion we have instead of the music. At those moments, it's a bit frustrating. Latest example being a magazine where the guy didn't say a single word about the music or lyrics, he thought it was more important to lay all the focus on what I believed. I already know what I believe, I want to hear either some good or bad criticism ... and it didn't serve any good purpose for the readers. It would not bother me if they bring up the religion stuff if the album otherwise gets a proper review.

HEAVEN'S
METAL

Subscribe to Heaven's Metal

+ Get a **FREE CD** w/each issue.

for only **\$9.99**

go to **hmmag.com**



LIFE AFTER PETRA...

INTERVIEW BY TREVOR RAY

CHANGE IN ONE'S LIFE IS INEVITABLE. WHILE WE ALL HAVE OR WILL EXPERIENCE BIG LIFE CHANGES, IT IS THAT LACK OF DIRECTION (NOT KNOWING WHERE OR HOW TO MOVE) WHEN LIFE COMES TO A STANDSTILL THAT IS PARTICULARLY DISTRESSING. RECENTLY, THIS REALITY HIT EACH MEMBER OF THE BAND PETRA, AND WHILE DIFFICULT FOR ALL OF THEM, IT WAS EVEN MORE SO FOR LONG-TERM MEMBERS BOB HARTMAN AND JOHN SCHLITT. NOT ONLY WAS THE CHANGE HARD-HITTING FOR PETRA, IT WOULD ALSO CREATE SOME RIPPLES IN THE CHRISTIAN MUSIC SCENE. BOB REMARKS, "MANY BANDS CAME TO US SHOWING A FEAR THAT WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO US, WOULD HAPPEN TO THEM. THEY COULD SEE THAT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF PETRA WOULD LEAVE A VOID."

Reality hits home when winds change in the music business, and every band must one day face this reality. A band can either adapt to every changing whim in the entertainment world or they can be remembered as part of music history's realm of fame. For Petra, that day came in early 2005, with ailing live show bookings and a lack of support for their latest release *Jekyll and Hyde*. The indication was that music tastes had changed to more alternative rock genres to suit the growing buying power and preferences of the present young generation. John Schlitt remarks, "None of the festivals wanted us. On top of that, *Jekyll and Hyde*, which we thought was one of the best albums we had done – there was no support from airplay. It must be time. We cannot complain. To be in the same band for 20 years, I cannot complain. I really enjoyed the last line-up of the band. We had fun and I really miss that. But now we can see God opening doors for Bob and me. I can't really get in His way."

For Bob and John, the decrease in show signings during 2005 was the "writing on the wall" for the band to conclude its finale. These ominous signs made Bob call John in March 2005 to discuss the band's future. It hit both of them - they were feeling dejected over the decision, but it was one they both agreed upon. The band decided to close up shop by May 2005, but John felt that the band needed to continue a final U.S. tour for the die-hard fans. It only seemed fair.

When the final note was sung, and the final chord played in late December 2005, it was naturally an emotional time for all the Petra members. It was a draining time with two shows played in succession. The fact that "this was it" made it hard to push through to the end. John had no ideas, during the last months of the final tour, about what he wanted to do; he felt that leaving it in God's hands was more peaceful than worrying. Bob, on the other hand, had one project ready, waiting in his workshop. He had orders for custom made guitars with an unusual finish - every Petra cover published on the surface. These guitars were displayed at every show and a quantity of backorders came through. Even while in the workshop, concentrating on the craftsmanship and the tools, Bob reflected back constantly on what he had achieved through Petra. Nevertheless, he was still waiting on God for future direction.

For John Schlitt, the first six weeks of retirement involved staying at home, using the couch and allowing the weeks to glide by idly. Unfortunately, there was still that uncertainty in what to do. It was not unlike the experience every college graduate has when studies have concluded, yet there is that constant fear of what the future holds. For John, there was some uncertainty, but the priority was just to rest and reflect. Still, there is only so much idleness a man can take. Music was his life, his passion, so something had to stir. He started

Your own private Heaven's Metal CD Sampler cover.

Instructions:

1. Cut out the box to the right carefully along the edges. It should fit into a jewel case perfectly.
2. Take your sibling's/roommate's/youth pastor's/friend's Jump 5 CD and empty its contents (put them in an envelope and "give" it back on their birthday). Use this freshly-emptied jewel case as your new *Metal Sampler* case.
3. Say a prayer of thanks to God for inspiring Retroactive to supply this CD for you, and that God would bless this label and this scene.

Note: Be sure to read the contents on page 14 before you cut this out.



working on his solo project, but it was a difficult start as he had little heart for this. But, as he worked on getting a producer and set musicians, the project got exciting for him.

Life started to take on a new spin when Bob called John with the opportunity to play at a Canadian retreat held at a university college. Because Bob didn't have the confidence to sing himself, he invited John on board to fill the role. The idea was to play up-beat praise and worship songs with John singing and Bob playing acoustic guitar. Imagine bare bones worship made from good songs, good guitar phrasing and a fantastic voice. No one can deny that John Schlitt can carry a tune well, especially with his multi-octave range. John mentions that this "praise and worship" ensemble was able to book a few concerts in Tennessee, as well as out of state. Only a few weeks ago, Bob and John returned to the USA after doing a short tour of Norway. There was a little uneasiness in what the response the Norwegian scene would hold for them both, as they were not touring as Petra. Petra found, during the last years of the band, that they generated a better response overseas than at home. However, for Bob and John, this ensemble was very low-key, unstructured and informal - just how they wanted it.

With the praise and worship set, Bob felt they should take it to the next step and put the music on CD. They recorded it at Bob's home studio and the CD is being pressed right as we read. John and Bob are going to continue to perform throughout 2007 with their praise and worship set. John

is waiting for the release of the CD before he concentrates on releasing his own project. During the days of Petra, John always wanted to do a solo release, but he decided when the band retired that he would finally accomplish this dream. Fans shouldn't expect the praise and worship ensemble to be a "Petra Praise III." Schlitt warns that this is something different. Bob comments, "This set was different for us. We could not have done it as a band. Now, we can relate to the audience. Just like playing in a church service was something we couldn't do when in Petra, now we feel we are being stretched. This is a new ministry for us."

Additionally, don't expect this new praise and worship CD to be the same as the aforementioned acoustic live show. The songs are upbeat, and in some ways, a reflection of past Petra praise albums. Bob hopes this CD will help heal the wound (left by the retirement of Petra) in the hearts of the many avid Petra fans. As for John's solo album, it will be released in late 2007 and will be produced by Amy Grant's drummer, Dan Metom. John has high praise for the music and high expectations for what this album will achieve. This album will be released online as a limited CD pressing. So, life for the band members of Petra hasn't seen them hang up their instruments or voices. Instead, after a short period of rest, God kicked in and provided them with new plans and opportunities. For example, John Schlitt was invited by producer Rick Derringer, who produced the album *Frankenstein*, to do a couple of songs on his up and coming album, an album which also features Phil Keaggy and one of the former

members of Grand Funk Railroad.

With the uncertainty that change brings, there comes a feeling of dread in what the future will hold. The men of Petra had lived their dream life for many years, so to see it go was a heart-rending tragedy - one destined to occur. Anyone will admit, even the band members, that Petra was a ground-breaking band in the Christian rock scene. They had their time and place in Christian music history. Nevertheless, even one year later, one can see that God does not sit idly by with inaction. Everything has a season, but God always has a plan. Everyone moves on, from being the church janitor to something better. From these experiences, we can learn about the fruits of the Spirit - to have patience and joy in even the routine situations.

In conclusion, for both Bob and John, the thought of totally giving up the music scene had crossed their minds. They didn't mind if that happened because they knew God would be in control of their lives. Bob did a stint as a Bible school teacher, at a local Christian school, with a focus on the first half of the Bible. For him, doing that full-time was okay. He could have regretted what he gave up - a life of living his dream. But, as Bob recognizes, he is a child of God. After all, it is only through Him, despite the changes that must be endured along the way, that we accomplish anything meaningful in life.





TITANIC – FULL STEAM AHEAD

Two bonus tracks feature STRYPER's Robert Sweet on drums! For fans of Judas Priest and Iron Maiden. angelicwarlord.com says, "This one proves quite the powerful piece – both musically and lyrically – with an avalanche of mega-tight riffs sustaining it from front to back."



DELIVERANCE - GREETINGS OF DEATH, ETC.

DELIVERANCE - THE FIRST FOUR YEARS

Both are Limited Edition reissues of early thrash demos from one of Christian metal's most prolific metal bands. Remastered, enhanced and new artwork!!!

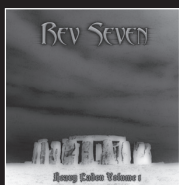


DELIVERANCE - ASSIMILATION (Special Edition) This remastered reissue contains a bonus CD of the 10 previously unreleased demos from the Assimilation recordings, making this a 2 CD set! This is brilliant, progressive metal made readily available once again!



DELIVERANCE - AS ABOVE~SO BELOW

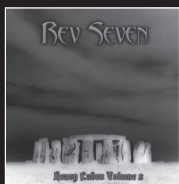
Few groups have ever blended epic thrash / speed metal with the elegance and beauty of progressive metal (later period Deliverance) with such devastating skill and brutality. Alternating so many moments of beauty with beastly moments of metallic fury and spine snapping riffs that would seem right at home on a Slayer, Believer, or early Deliverance album.



REV SEVEN - VOLUME 1 (two albums on one CD, 20 songs)

REV SEVEN - VOLUME 2 (two albums on one CD, 20 songs)

Guitarist, Bill Menchen (Titanic, Final Axe, Seventh Power) re-recorded all the songs from his legendary unreleased demo session with his band from the early 90's. No one does an Ozzy and Black Sabbath impersonation better than Rev Seven!



REDEEMER - ANNO DOMINI ('84-89)

REDEEMER - DOUBLE EDGED SWORD ('84-89)

Re-recorded unreleased songs from one of Bill Menchen's first bands.

This is classic metal from a band that wore their love of melodic metal as a badge of honor!



ZION –THRILLSEEKER

"Gritty, scratchy and hard rocking while delivering an abundance of energy at the same time..." —angelicwarlord.com. Demos and rarities collection delivers the goods! Features X-Sinner vocalist, Rex Scott!!!

All releases available from
radrockers.com, cdbaby.
com, amazon.com,
Mardel Christian Stores,
christiandiscs.com and your
favorite online stores!

Distributed by
brutalplanet@gmail.com
retroactiverecords.net

Rarely does a group of artists come along that can pull something like this off...

Madmen and Dreamers

Reviving
the
Fine Art
of
Musical
and
Theatrical
Storytelling



"This story should be told to every generation."
Trutti Gasperinetti, choreographer, New York City

Rock Theatre Productions, Inc.



Distributed by:



Available at:

CD Baby
Amazon.com
iTunes
eMusic
MSN
FYE
BurnLounge
Urge
Napster
MTV
Verizon
Virgin Mobile

MadElf
productions

www.madmen-and-dreamers.com

www.madelf.com



Contact:
Mark at (570) 417-3818
mark@silentplanetpromotions.com
www.silentplanetpromotions.com

Stories of healing, reconciliation and redemption for survivors of this generation.

MINISTRY & METAL?

TWO VIEWS FROM HOLLAND (ROY) & THE USA (GEORGE)

The Christian's Metal Scene

The Christian metal scene itself is the biggest problem Christian metal is facing nowadays. Bands and fans hang around at Christian festivals, read Christian magazines and buy cd's in Christian bookstores. We have created our own safe place outside the regular metalscene. But didn't God call us to reach for those who need our message most of all?

A writer of Holland's biggest rock and metal magazine once told me that most people inside the regular European metalscene are 'frustrated ex-christians'. Once they were going to church, but Christians and the church failed them. They blamed God for it and often turned completely to the other side, sometimes even starting up anti-Christian or satanic bands. One thing they have in common: they are allergic to everything that has anything to do with Christianity.

Some years before I spoke with him, my band was playing in a small club in a small village in a small country: Holland. We only had four songs to play, so we played all of them twice. People liked our enthusiasm and perhaps even our music. But not our message. As soon as we started to talk about the love of God (yes, in a very cool way), all non-Christians left the room. We went home with mixed feelings. This situation didn't happen just once. And not only to us.

Christian musicians seem to have forgotten what their most important audience is all about. Yes, some of us still try to reach for the lost ones, but often they fail because they don't know how to reach them. Nowadays it's so much easier for a band to end up inside the Christian metalscene with all its festivals, websites and magazines. Good for their CD sales, too! Nothing wrong with that, but aren't some of us called to shine our light inside the darkest places as well?

When a missionary goes to work in Africa the first thing he will do is start to know the culture and the language. Without this knowledge it's very hard to tell people what the message of salvation is all about. The situation is not different when it comes to metal. When you are called to be a missionary inside the metal scene, the first thing you'll need to do is to get knowledge of the culture and the language. You should communicate on a level that the metal scene understands. Otherwise, your words will miss their goal.

To my surprise still many Christian bands haven't thought about this issue at all. They seem to be unaware of the fact that a large number of the metal fans are the so called 'frustrated ex-Christians'. These people are not waiting for Christians to tell them what's right and what's wrong. These people are not waiting for God to enter their lives. They've made up their mind a long time ago and are definitely not willing to make a change. They only want one thing of us: respect.

We, Christians, forgot to show this respect for these people. We have to respect the free choice, God has given to them as well. Instead, we start to preach about the Lord. The words are fine, but timing is often so wrong. There is no communication on an equal level at all. What other options do we give non-Christians than to leave the club? The result: even if this Christian band succeeds in reaching one single metal fan, they push one hundred of them further away from the Lord.

It's not just a story that's on my heart. It's reality. It's a matter of life and death. It's the worst case scenario and it's happening in Western Europe where I come from. And I believe it happens all around the world. The Christian metal scene isn't aware of it, as we are having a good time together inside our subscene. Nothing wrong with that! But that's not where our mission should end!

Fortunately, a growing number of bands notice the situation. They search for solutions to get their message across again. Now it's time to support them, as people seem to have mistaken their actions. Even in HM Fanzine I'm reading articles where people judge bands for 'hiding their message'.

But isn't the message the same as before, only brought in a different way? By using metaphors (didn't Jesus use many of those in the Bible?) or fantasy stories. This way they make the message understandable and even acceptable for non-Christians. Suddenly there is this great opportunity to communicate with these people.

It's not an easy mission, as bands still deal with these so called 'frustrated ex-Christians'. To gain best results from their mission, bands often take off the label 'Christian band'. For many non-Christians it would already be one step too far when a band is linked with the Christian metalscene. So, these bands have to act careful and the last thing they need are Christians labelling them a 'Christian band'. It's about time that we see the importance of their mission and give them the respect they deserve for their brave job.

In the end they are the ones that do succeed in reaching non-Christians. And it's only Christians complaining that the message is 'tuned down' or that they 'hide' the fact that they are Christians. Not the non-Christians! It's simple: when you as a Christian drive a car, does this make your car Christian? No. So, why should we label a band 'Christian'? Of course, it feels safe for ourselves. It's a way to keep up our Christian metal scene. But, at the same time, we make it very hard for the band involved to complete their mission.

To be honest: I don't believe in a Christian metal scene at all. Yes, I know we have created something that we call a Christian metalscene. But I feel ashamed of the way we abuse it to keep bands 'inside' our subscene. Of

CHRISTIAN ROCK/METAL CATALOG

**CDs,
cassettes,
video,
t-shirts,
magazines,
DVDs, collectibles,
lots of rare items!!!
1980s, 1990s, 2000s**



***Stryper, Bloodgood, Petra,
Bride, Barren Cross, Saint,
Mortification, Sacred Warrior,
Holy Soldier, Guardian,
X-Sinner, Deliverance, &
MUCH MORE!***

**For brand new list:
Brent Miller
2501 Royal Air Drive
Jefferson City, MO 65109-0609
email: r4ofusnow@cs.com**

"THE WAIT IS OVER!!!"



UP FROM THE ASHES - Live DVD

featuring live tracks from Deliverance, Saint, Ultimatum,
Once Dead (Last performance with Scott Waters)
Stricken, Demize and more!
Now Available

Upcoming Releases:

Eternal RYTE - Anthology

The limited edition 2 disc set featuring
the full Pure Metal release,
World Requiem, all the demos, exclusive live material and more!
Limited edition of 1000 – first 100 copies
signed by the original band members

Also watch for new releases from roxx records this year...

Stricken – debut cd

Featuring former members of Krush, Tower of Hundred and Fullife.
For fans of Disturbed and Godsmack
(shipping this summer)

Also limited edition of 1000

Ultimatum – Live in California

Ultimatum – DVD Anthology

The first 100 copies of each will be signed by the band
(shipping this fall)

visit roxxproductions.com for all the details

course it's important for Christians to have a place of their own. But isn't it much more important to reach the lost? By creating our safe subscene outside the regular metal scene, we have almost made it impossible for ourselves to reach the regular metal scene. They won't enter our Christian metal scene. We have to go out to reach for them!

We should feel blessed with the bands that have the strength to take this step, despite all the critics from the Christian metal fans. As they take their mission seriously and shine the Light in dark places. And every single one of us can make this life-saving mission even stronger. Not by criticizing these bands, but by keeping them in our prayers.

—Roy / Fear Dark / Holland

Don't Skirt The Issue: Be Frank About Your Faith

Steve Rowe's article, "Whatever Happened To The Revolution?" in the "Throwing Down The Gauntlet" section of the Feb/Mar issue of Heaven's Metal hit upon a truth that I think some bands are missing today. That is: hiding your Christian faith will not give your band more impact or success in the world.

First, let me state that I believe there is a place for bands who don't have a very direct message and are more subtle. A friend of mine indicated he became a Christian after listening to Kansas' material after Kerry Livgren became a Christian. The lyrics were not direct, but contained enough to get him to start thinking. There are bands that claim this is their place in the music industry and I believe God does have a purpose for those who give a more subtle message. I also believe there may be bands whose members are Christians, but feel their place in life is primarily to entertain and not evangelize. Their message may be moral and aligned with Biblical truths, but it is not "Christian" per se. This very well may be their calling. I don't dispute this.

Having said this, I also believe there are bands that are using this as an excuse. I've read articles where it really sounds like some band members are ashamed to say they are a Christian and/or state they believe in the Christian way. In one interview I read with a band that has been very successful in both the "secular" and "Christian" markets, I cringed when the band member tried to avoid answering any questions relating to the Christian faith. Their defense was that they worked hard not to be pigeon-holed as a "Christian" band. I can understand this, especially if they feel discrimination in the industry occurs as a result of this. But come on, who are we kidding? The interviewer knew very well that they were Christians so they weren't hiding anything. He actually used their reaction against them when he printed the interview. Maybe if they hadn't skirted the issue so much they would have received some respect in this area. A similar response was elicited when a major music publication did a review of this same band's latest album (at that time) and the reviewer noted that they were "playing it safe" by trying to keep it secret that they were Christians. Apparently, it was no secret to the reviewer.

My point is this: God calls folks to cover many areas because we are all at different stages in life. Someone may not respond to a direct message, but they may instead be more open to a subtle message which gets them thinking in the right direction. I believe He does call some to give a more indirect, yet positive message and that He can use this as well. But Christians, don't be ashamed and skirt the issue when someone directly questions you about your faith. You're not fooling anyone but yourself and you lose respect from folks who can see through this. As Steve Rowe states in his article, "The 'world' is searching so hard for truth. Give it to them straight. I urge you to pray about this." Therefore, if you are asked about your beliefs or your faith, "give it to them straight." Don't skirt the issue.

—George Del Signore / Franklin, MA

HEAVEN'S
METAL

ALBUM REVIEWS



KEKAL

THE HABIT OF FIRE

Asian extreme metal bands may be as rare as hen's teeth, but Indonesian Kekal have proven they're not just a novelty act.

Never happy to make the same record, each album in Kekal's 12-year career has shown innovation and progression of sound. 2005's *Acidity* showed some "clean pipes," sharing vocal duties with the usual guttural growls. For 2007, Kekal's new byword is evolution—their sixth album shows the band shedding their death/black metal skin completely for a new progressive metal sound. The death metal vocals have been replaced about 98% by a clean melodic voice that sounds remarkably like Geddy Lee of Rush. *The Habit of Fire* incorporates a lot of non-metal music styles—like electronica, industrial, prog rock, and even jazz—yet remains guitar driven. There are some lengthy songs, but they never go into Dream Theater jam session mode. Only occasionally does the band's old self shine through. Overall, this is a convincing transformation ... but will longtime Kekal fans buy it?

[Open Grave] Chris Gatto



GYPSY CARNS

GOSPEL TRAIN COMING

Most of this album is comprised of good old fashioned blues; you know songs written by Robert Johnson, Blind Willie

Johnson, and Mississippi Fred Mc Dowell and so forth. It's just Gypsy, his guitar some classic songs and a passion that is undeniable. If you dig the blues, this is right up your alley!

[Trailer Trash Music] Michael Larson



PRAYER

SHOW ME THE WAY

If you are a fan of the current metalcore rage that has swept the planet then seek this out. Prayer has solid songs and an

uncompromising Christian message. Musically, Prayer offers nothing really fresh or new. It's solid Metalcore. This band could go far, and may; I just wish they would stop following and try to lead. [Independent] Michael Larson



IMMORTAL SOUL

LINES IN THE SAND

Immortal Soul (not to be confused with Immortal Souls) play heavy metal. Vocally, they remind me slightly of older Iced Earth. The strength of the vocals really does vary from song to song. Musically, they tend to be more groove oriented than power or progressive. There are some guitar solos here and there, but still it's lacking in that area, quite simply not enough "wankery" happening on this. The production is also a touch thin, not enough to really hate it, but still enough to note. [Silent Sky] Michael Larson



SUICIDE OF DEMONS

REAP WHAT YOU SOW

This three song EP is brilliant mix of death and thrash metal. I found myself loving the music from the start,

and the vocals grew on me pretty quick. I went to their website and saw that this is their second three song EP/demo. I really want to know why they haven't put out a full length yet. Anyway, run, don't walk and get you this now! [Independent] Michael Larson

MISERATION

YOUR DEMONS~THEIR ANGELS

The prolific Jani Stefanovic collaborated with Scar Symmetry's talented vocalist Christian Alvestam to create this dark and aggressive mix of thrashy progressive power metal and melodic death metal. Anyone who has had the privilege to hear Scar Symmetry has already experienced the diversity and brutality of Alvestam's singing—he possesses several harsh death tones, a throaty growl and a solid, clean/melodic voice. He comfortably navigates his way through Jani's cacophonous and doomy compositions which are more riff oriented than ever, yet still retain that signature symphonic speed quality. While the final musical product is essentially an amalgam of Divinefire and Gothenburg death metal, a lyrical denouement is less evident. Due to the intense musical conflagration and the heady supernatural narratives of deception, depravity and spiritual warfare—replete with "mindbender" terms like "Noctivagant" and

"invective"—you might want to listen to this with two aspirin in one hand and a dictionary in the other. Miseration, commiseration, indeed! [Rivel] Jonathan Swank



A.W.A.S.

HOPE

A.W.A.S.'s (Ardent War Against Satan) first full length release is old school death metal. Imagine if you

will, that a younger Steve Rowe and some of the blokes from Bolt Thrower decided to jam some songs. Now, add to that some uncompromising lyrics, top notch production and nice packaging and *Hope* starts to break through. This is not new or ground-breaking in the slightest, but it is solid death metal and quite the enjoyable listen.

[Open Grave] Michael Larson



NEAL MORSE

SOLA SCRIPTURA

When Neal Morse left Spock's Beard and Transatlantic a few years ago to focus on his solo career, several people took

notice, no doubt expecting Neal to quietly fade from the musical landscape with nary a sound. Each album he has released since then, however, has been further affirmation that doing this was not only a wise decision by Neal, but in fact the next step in the fulfillment of God's calling on his life. Like his other solo releases, when experiencing the beautiful musical arrangements and lyrics on *Sola Scriptura*, one can only conclude that this album is divinely inspired. Throughout the course of the album's 76 minutes, Neal uses the story of Martin Luther and his role in the restoration of the belief in salvation by faith to challenge the listener to not be afraid of what God wants to restore in their own life and in the church as a whole. Featuring Mike Portnoy (Dream Theater) on drums and Paul Gilbert (Mr. Big) on guitar, Neal has created another album that should be required listening for all music fans. Simply brilliant. [Radiant] Chris Beck

Surf this: letter7rocks.com, thesacrificed.com, retroactiverecords.net, sinceoctober.com, aorheaven.com, angelolatona.com, davebeegle.com



LETTER 7

SALT OF THE EARTH

Pure, solid classic hard rock bliss (reminiscent of all of the best of old-school 70's and early 80's rock) but with enough 'umph' to sound great today. With heavy, crunchy guitars, guitar solos, high octane vocals, bold Biblical lyrics and a solid rhythm section, this indie CD is a major highlight to me. Some may call it dated, but I think it is a breath of fresh air. [Independent] Jeff McCormack

ESSENCE OF SORROW

REFLECTIONS OF THE OBSCURE

The name and lyrics lead one to believe that this is the latest band to enter the annals of doom metal; however, the music is nothing of the sort. Led by Christian Palin (Random Eyes) on vocals and Jani Stefanovic (Divinefire, Miseration) on guitar, Essence of Sorrow effectively balances heaviness and melody within each song. Though there is nothing here that is particularly memorable, *Reflections...* is an all-around high quality album (production, artwork, etc.) that leaves the listener wanting more upon its conclusion. [Rivel] Chris Beck



THE SACRIFICED

THE DA VINCI HOAX

This is a really good concept CD with a classic power metal feel and a strong Queensryche influence, in part due to vocalist Eli Prinsen's vocal range. The vocals are a bit "distant" sounding in the mix and the instrumentation is mixed a bit thin, otherwise this would be a real powerhouse release. There is much to enjoy here and I definitely await more from these Florida boys. [Independent] Jeff McCormack



X-SINNER

LOUD AND PROUD +2

If you missed the 2001 release of this CD, here is the new and improved version. If you are looking for edgier, more raw sounding X-Sinner tracks, this CD is it. We are treated to four tracks that later made it on *Get It*, one track later on *Peace Treaty/Fire It Up*,

as well as seven previously unreleased tracks. This new edition contains two bonus tracks from the 2002 *Cracked* release, recorded under the name Angry Einsteins. [Retroactive] Jeff McCormack



SINCE OCTOBER

GASPING FOR HOPE

Here is one of those CDs that makes you scratch your head wondering why these guys aren't signed. This CD is top-notch in every way—songs, packaging, production, etc. Produced by Travis Wyrick (who has produced bands like Pillar, Disciple, and P.O.D.) this CD stands above the quality of many other independent releases. Of all the bands Wyrick has produced, I mention these three because musically, this sounds very similar in style to elements of each of them—gut level vocals with musical crunch and energy. Highly recommended for fans of these bands. [Independent] Jeff McCormack



MAD MAX

WHITE SANDS

This is the third Christian-based CD to be released by this powerful German band, whose origins date back to the early eighties. While I found their 2006 release, *Night of the White Rock*, to be a little edgier/heavier style-wise, this new CD kicks it up a notch on tunes like "We Fight in White," and "War." Ultimately, they settle-in with all of the melodic heavenly rock feel you'd expect from such bands as Bon Jovi, modern Def Leppard or Europe. With big choruses, superb musicianship and production, this brilliantly executed arena rock style will thrill those, like me, who still love this genre of music. [AOR Heaven] Jeff McCormack



ANGELO LATONA

UNVEILED

This guitarist plays clean, melodic instrumentals with nice tones. Each song is light, neo-jazzy, tasteful and progressive, but especially the "Trinity Suite," which comes in three parts. [Independent] Doug Van Pelt



DAVE BEEGLE

ACOUSTIC MAYHEM

When it comes to musical prowess, it's hard not to be blown away when you hear and see Dave Beegle play guitar.

Acoustic Mayhem: Live At The Rialto Featuring The Dave Beegle Acoustic Band comes with two discs: CD, with a full 78 minutes of acoustic jamming; and DVD, showing the same performance with multiple camera angles and (the best part) an optional 5.1 Surround Sound mix. This is a really good snapshot of the greatness that resides in this guy's fingers. It's like he's got 11 or 12 digits, because he's so fast and yet so expressive. And it doesn't hurt that he partners himself with some great players, too. The DVD also comes with a couple of bonuses: some soundcheck snippets and an honest-to-goodness guitar lesson with split screens to carefully show fretting and picking hands. Seeing him breakdown his gorgeous adaptation of Bach's "Ode To Joy" is evidence alone of how awesome this dude is. Besides picking leads and strumming rhythms, this guy can bend a string and hold a note just like an electric (as evident in the closer, "Kara Kum"). [Independent] Doug Van Pelt



ZION

THRILLSEEKER

For anyone not familiar with Zion's history and Rex Scott of X-Sinner's past, well, here is a mix and taste of some great stuff. We get a taste of three great songs from their *Thunder from the Mountain* release; two are supposedly live, the other is the title track of this CD, "Thrillseeker." Other gems include: a track from their first 1982 demo; two tracks from their full length indie release *Rock for Eternity*; two pre-production tracks from the *Thunder...* era and some other fun stuff. I would have rather seen a release of the entire first demo and *Rock for Eternity* tapes, but this is a great release nonetheless. [Retroactive] Jeff McCormack

CHOICE MERCHANDISE

Since 1995

Online merchandise fulfillment



What we do...

- > We build a customized shopping cart to fit your website.
- > Your fans buy stuff. We do all the work.
- > We send you a monthly statement along with millions and millions of dollars
(okay, maybe thousands or hundreds, but we think big that way).
- > We do the grunt work for all your merch needs, at a rate less than industry standards.
- > And as you can see, we advertise your band in cool magazines like this.
- > Contact us...

CHOICE MERCHANDISE
919.847.4211
Info@ChoiceMerchandise.com

THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

By Steve Rowe

THOSE WHO ONCE WERE??

I am writing this column on Easter Saturday 2007. Easter is a great time for born-again Christians. It is the time we reflect on Christ's death and resurrection. It never ceases to just blow me away that God came as man to lay down His life to free me from my sin. It is always an interesting time from my perspective, because Christ came to set us free from sin, sickness and the curse of The Law.

Every Easter for the past 5 years I have been very unwell. This possibly means I am doing something right? This also possibly means I am doing something wrong? Of course, we as Christians should never underestimate the work of the Devil against us. Back in 1994, my name was number one on the Norwegian black metal inner circle's list of death (the people they would curse to death). Interestingly, I am still here in God's work. Chuck Schuldiner of famous Florida death metal pioneers Death was also on that list. Of course, some years ago Chuck died of cancer.

I was at a great Jesus rock concert on Thursday night seeing awesome young, all-girl band Barlow Girl—three sisters rocking hard for Jesus and speaking about godly lives and salvation. It brought a tear to my eye to see over 600, 13 - 18 year old kids hungry to hear about Jesus from their peers. It reminded me of when I was 22 playing with Lightforce in support of Whitecross. I will never forget Scott Wenzel's passion for evangelism and leading young people to Jesus.

Yesterday, being Good Friday, our city put on a free outdoor Gospel concert at the beachside, about 5 minutes away. A young Christian rock band called Red Ink closed out the concert with some solid Gospel rock. It reminded me of the 80's when we often played outdoor shows in the city square or on the beachfront (when I was 23 and 24). Reflecting on these two shows today, I praise God that He is raising up young musicians to carry on the work of rock evangelism.

Jerusalem brought out an album in 1996 called *Those Were the Days*. Was this in some way a reflection from singer Ulf Christiansson that he was willing to become



one of those who once were? Maybe sitting here, I am one of those who once were? Ulf continues strongly in Christian ministry as do I. God always has a plan for all of us. Leading people in the early 90's Norwegian black metal scene are dead or in prison. The Burzum guy, the lead singer of Dissection and a member of Gorgoroth are all in prison. They are part of those who once were, but are no more. We must pray for them because their evil is all in vain and they are on their way to Hell.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM



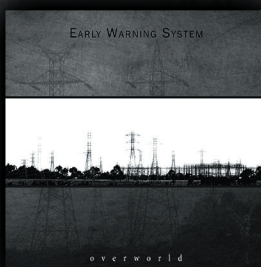
overworld

Hard rock on the progressive side, with great hooks and melodies and outstanding musicianship.

"EWS is a band that has caught my attention, with a modern straight forward sound and down to earth, easy to comprehend lyrics.

Australia just keeps producing quality music, leading the way for other up and coming bands."

Dale Thompson (Bride)



Mastered by Ty Tabor (King's X)



Available now: www.soundmass.com

PASTOR BOB'S INTERNATIONAL REPORT

By Pastor Bob

Greetings!

As I write this, I have just returned from a tour of Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland. I spoke at three festivals, churches, high schools, colleges, and more. I am convinced that I have the best job in the world!

One of the highlights of my trip was doing the first-ever Christian Metal Festival in Denmark called The Green Light District Festival. Just 2 years ago, Barricades was the only Christian Metal band in Denmark. This year we had 5 Danish metal bands playing the festival along with Intohimo (Sweden), Frosthadr (Norway), and Crimson Moonlight (Sweden).

I don't think I have ever seen such energy and enthusiasm from a crowd. Pilgrim, the singer for Crimson Moonlight, told me he had never played to a more excited crowd. Many of the Danes who attended had never even been to a concert before. We have already begun planning for next year!

As always, here are three friends representing Sweden, Norway, and Switzerland. I know you will enjoy reading their reports.

[sanctuaryinternational.com]



Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, & metal
Johannes Jonsson, Oddmund Solheim & Mike Hauser



Johannes Jonsson – Sweden

Hi, I'm Johannes Jonsson and I have put the Metal Bible together. It's a special Bible edition that, besides the New Testament, also contains 128 extra pages with testimonies from metalheads that share their life stories and talk about what God and the Bible means to them. Nicko McBrain (Iron Maiden), Tommy Aldridge (Whitesnake), Peter Baltes (Accept), Michael Sweet (Stryper), Steve Rowe (Mortification), Christian Rivel (Narnia, Divinefire), Simon Pilgrim Rosn (Crimson Moonlight) are some of the featured people in the Metal Bible. The response of the Metal Bible has been fantastic and in less than 2 years over 20,000 copies have been given away! Amen. At Sweden Rock Festival last year over 20,000 metalheads were gathered and 6,700 of them took a Metal Bible home with them! Most of these people would never have touched an ordinary Bible, but they really wanted to have the Metal Bible since it related to them. Please pray that God will continue to use this special Bible edition to break down many prejudices and misconceptions and help lead many to Christ.
 [metalbible.nu/enginfo.htm]



Oddmund Solheim – Norway

So, what's going on in Norway these days? I guess some of you are familiar with the early Norwegian metal bands, such as Groms, Antestor, Extol and Schaliach, which appeared on the *Northern Lights* compilation 10 years ago. Of those four bands, we're still enjoying Antestor and Extol, but quite a few bands have been let out of the rehearsal closet the past few years. Bands such as Grand Lux, Drottnar, Lengsel and Frosthadr to name a few, have released records, done concerts and so on. Speaking of concerts, the main event in Norway in the Christian metal scene is Nordicfest, a festival that saw the light of day in November 2002. It all started as a celebration of Nordic Mission's 5-year anniversary, but has been an annual event since then. Bands like Antestor, Extol, Drottnar, Grand Lux, Frosthadr and several other Norwegian bands have entered the stage, and also overseas bands, such as Crimson Thorn, Paramaecium and Rob Rock have been presented. And not to forget the one and only show done by Horde – ever! A lot of other Nordic bands have been presented as well, such as Narnia, Crimson Moonlight, Pantokrator, Admonish, Sotahuuto and Renascent. Another festival might be presented this year, probably celebrating Nordic



Mission's 10-year anniversary! Come visit us at Nordicfest some day to see what's going on, or come and have a chat at the Nordic Booth at Cornerstone this summer! [nordicfest.no]

Mike Hauser – Switzerland

It was in the second half of 2003 when a few guys came together with the idea to start a Christian Metal Festival in Switzerland. There was nothing like that in our country and we thought that should change. From April 20-22, 2007, the fourth Elements of Rock Festival took place in Switzerland. He had 3 days of concerts, fellowship, seminars, and talks. Beside that, we have organized a lot of small concerts in our area, sold a lot of CDs at our distro and also had some church services and prayer groups. It's amazing how all that started in that short time. Come and join us at Elements of Rock '08!
 [http://elementsofrock.com]



In these evil times we will rise!



Eluveitie - Spirit
Sizes: M - L - XL

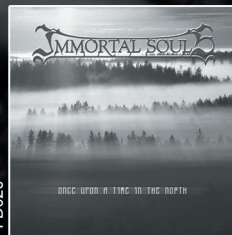


Slechtvalk
The war that
plagues the lands
Sizes: M - L - XL



FD024

Royal Anguish
A Journey Through The
Shadows Of Time CD
Death-gothic metal from the USA



FD020

Immortal Souls - Once
Upon A Time In The North
2-CD Digipack



FD017

Slechtvalk - At the
Dawn of War CD
Viking metal from Holland



FD023

Eluveitie - Spirit CD
The Swiss celtic pagans
are back with their first
full-length album.

Order your copy directly in North America:
www.amazon.com
www.theendrecords.com
www.radrockers.com
www.facedownrecords.com
www.shaveraudioandvideo.com

Or buy directly from Fear Dark in Holland! **PayPal**
Check our website for shirts, patches and other merchandise!



www.fear-dark.com
info@fear-dark.com



CIRCUS DAWN
Between The Lines Of Gray



ICE SCREAM
Finnish Metal Collection



SACRIFICIUM
Escaping The Stupor



IDRAGONI
IDragonI - Limited Edition

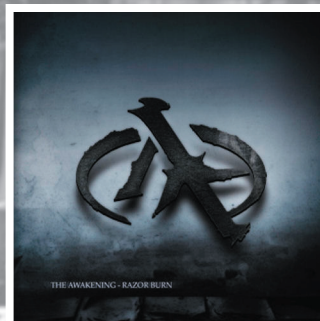


BEAUTY FOR ASHES
My Secret Sin



MORTIFICATION
Erasing The Goblin

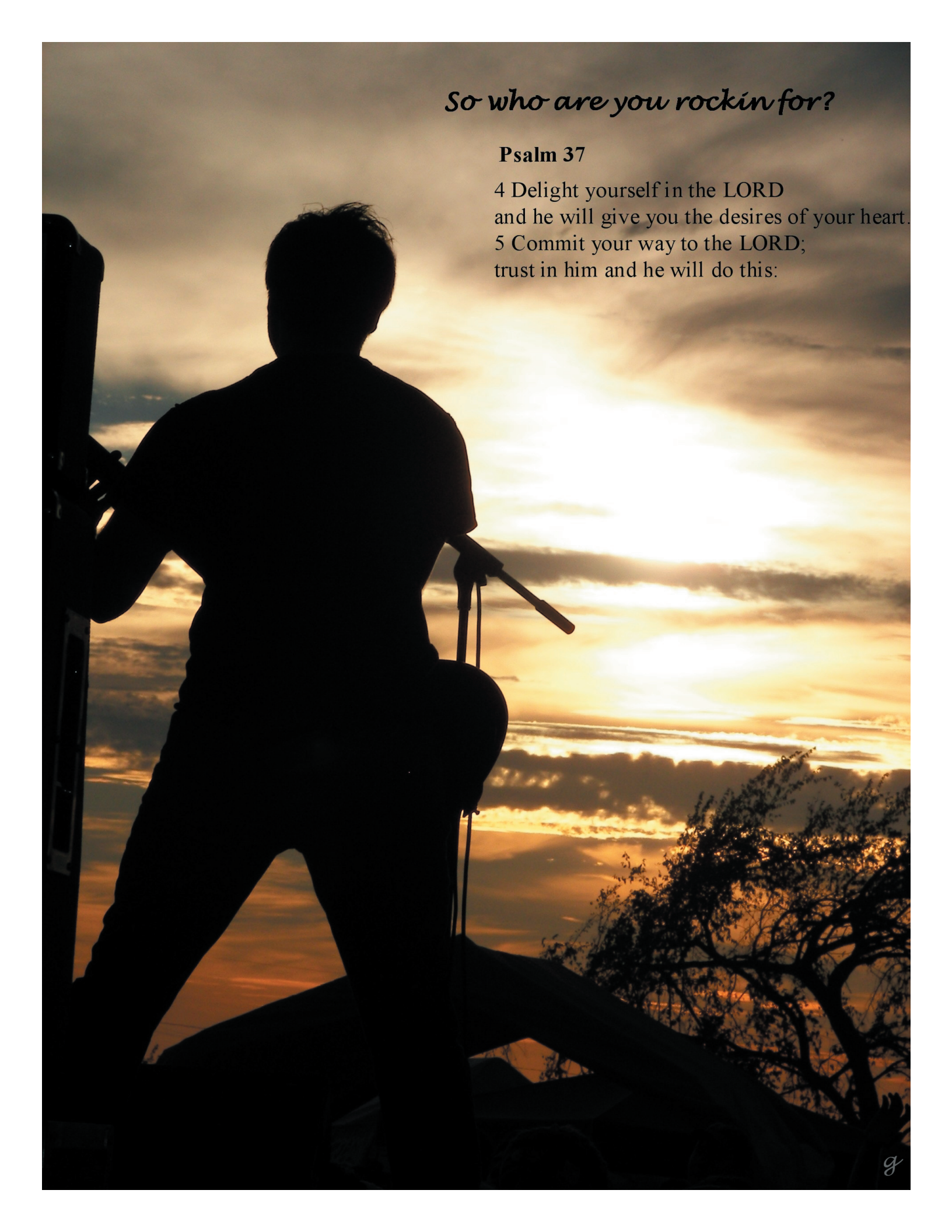
NOW AVAILABLE...



THE AWAKENING
Razor Burn

YOUNG SIDE
RECORDS

8961 Springwood Court
Bonita Springs, FL 34135 USA
239.989.2059
info@youngside.com | www.youngside.com

A silhouette of a person standing on a hill, playing a guitar, with a dramatic sunset sky in the background. The person is facing away from the camera, looking out over the horizon. The sky is filled with clouds, and the sun is low, creating a warm, golden glow. The person's shadow is cast on the ground.

So who are you rockin' for?

Psalm 37

4 Delight yourself in the LORD
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him and he will do this: